

CHAPTER 1

Concepts & Issues

The Marine Corps: A Proven Force In Readiness





The Marine Corps is on duty around the globe as the 21st Century begins, working hard to serve the United States and to advance national interests. Of the 172,200 Marines on active duty today, two-thirds are in the Operating Forces. Nearly 30,500 Marines are forward deployed, forward based, forward stationed, or deployed for training.

SERVING THE NATION

Marines exist to meet the security needs of the nation and current affairs point out the many challenges of the post Cold War era. During the past year Marines operated worldwide. They supported humanitarian and peacekeeping operations in East Timor, and responded to contingencies in Southwest Asia, the Balkans, the Sinai, Africa, and the Caribbean. In South and Central America, Marines provided security, assisted in disaster relief, and contributed to the nation's counter-narcotics efforts. In the United States, Marines assisted hurricane victims in North Carolina, made many training deployments, and conducted a myriad of activities necessary to gain and to maintain essential combat skills. Beyond these operational tasks, Marines served the intelligence community, provided airlift support to the Executive Branch, guarded American diplomatic outposts in 123 international locations, and provided a Chemical Biological Incident Response Force that is now a national asset.



As we enter the 21st Century, the strategic role of the Marine Corps, as defined by the 82nd Congress, remains unchanged: to provide a capable expeditionary force-in-readiness that is versatile, adaptable, and powerful. While the focus of national security requirements has evolved since the Cold War, demanding contingencies at home and globally demonstrate that the Marine Corps will remain an essential element of our national security strategy. In short, to meet current and projected security challenges facing the nation, the primary focus of the Corps will be to provide ready and decisive crisis response forces, comprised of highly capable men and women.

THE 21st CENTURY - POLITICAL AND MILITARY REALITIES

The 21st Century security environment will confront the United States with situations of vast political and military complexity and geographical dispersion. The dangers we face are unprecedented in their intricacy. Ethnic conflict and outlaw states threaten regional stability. Terrorism, drugs, organized crime, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are global concerns that transcend national borders. Environmental damage and rapid population growth undermine economic and political stability in many countries.

The future focal point of instability will likely be the world's littorals, where most of the great crises of the 20th Century occurred. Here, too, are well over half the world's population and over three-quarters of its cities. Littorals, where land and sea meet, are crucial economic areas. They are where seaborne trade originates and enters its markets and where control of the sea lines of communications and maritime choke points will increase in strategic importance.

To meet these challenges, the U.S. must maintain armed forces with a full-spectrum of capabilities to deter conflicts, to respond to crises, and to fight and win against any foe. A critical requirement, then, is to project and to sustain decisive military power in forward areas where challenges and America's interests converge. As the number of overseas bases declines and the number of U.S. military personnel permanently stationed overseas dwindles, the demand for versatile, responsive, sea-based forces becomes imperative. Usually, the force-of-choice to safeguard these vital U.S. interests is forward deployed naval expeditionary forces. Indeed, America's naval services - the Navy and Marine Corps - are engaged around the clock, providing on-scene presence of combat capable forces that can "shape" events ashore.

SEA DOMINANCE - GLOBAL POWER IMPERATIVE

The United States is a maritime nation, relying on the guaranteed use of the seas for both its economic well being and its ability to project military power in support of its national interests. Our global strategic importance to regional powers on the rim of Eurasia and the vibrant emerging nations of the Pacific-Indian Oceans, demands that our national security strategy be transoceanic. Even with extensive strategic airlift

capability, the sea remains the only viable means to move and sustain sizable military forces. Thus, seapower is essential for the U.S. to maintain global leadership. These facts, coupled with the country's national security strategy of engagement, mean that America's naval expeditionary forces will play an important future role in protecting vital U.S. interests. These forces also will ensure regional stability, project decisive combat power, and promote peace, free enterprise, and democracy.



The Navy and Marine Expeditionary Forces are powerful national security assets that no other nation can match. In fact, given the current and foreseeable international political environment, they will be the sine qua non of America's engagement capability in the 21st Century. This is so because naval forces are flexible, mobile, and offer rapid responsiveness and decisive power while sustaining themselves for extended periods. Naval forces also enjoy great freedom of movement on the open sea. They can reach a crisis spot without crossing national boundaries, remain unobserved over the horizon until needed, and then depart an area as swiftly as they arrived once a solution is reached. When land-based facilities are unavailable, naval forces can be tailored for specific situations, providing carrier-based air power, Marine air-ground task forces, sea-launched cruise missiles, or special warfare forces as needed. Naval expeditionary forces can conduct and sustain operations from sea bases. These forces also can project power inland further than ever before, which means that an increasingly larger portion of the globe now falls under the potential influence of U.S. naval power. Today, and

for the foreseeable future, naval power is essential if the U.S. is to effectively project global military influence.

Naval expeditionary forces are powerful instruments of national policy with special strengths stemming from the complementary but distinct capabilities of the Navy and Marine Corps to command the seas and influence operations ashore. These forces can dominate a foe in the littoral battlespace and the adjoining airspace thus reducing risks to follow-on forces. Naval expeditionary forces also can establish control of ports and airfields and inland areas to enable the majority of troops, equipment, and supplies to flow ashore. Significantly, naval expeditionary forces can easily reinforce and complement other American and allied forces, providing great unity of effort for land, sea, and air forces. The result is tremendous lethal striking power and an unprecedented means to leverage joint warfare.

Besides serving operational needs, forward deployed naval expeditionary forces also fulfill important diplomatic roles. They are a visible and tangible expression of U.S. political commitment and military strength. The military capabilities of these forces serve to deter regional aggressors and maintain regional stability. Friendly powers typically welcome the presence of American naval forces, seeing them as contributing to regional stability. They also remind potential belligerents that the entire military force of the United States can be deployed. By promoting peace through overseas engagement and partnership with our friends and our allies, naval forces prevent threats to stability and avoid the need to fight in defense of the nation's interests.





UNIQUE MARINE FORCE CAPABILITIES

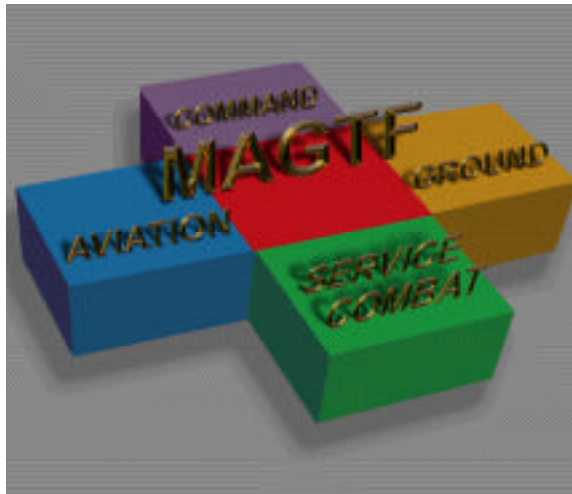
As the landward extension of naval expeditionary forces, Marine forces significantly magnify the projection capabilities of naval forces ensuring that they remain influential in peacetime, compelling in crisis, and decisive in war. Their expeditionary readiness, flexibility, and broad global utility make Marine forces a preferred global choice of the National Command Authorities in the execution of contingency missions. The Marine Corps' primary mission is to provide Fleet Marine Forces with combined arms capabilities to include integrated aviation and logistical elements, for service as part of a naval expeditionary force. These two dimensions, the combined arms concept and expeditionary readiness, together with its total force package, make the Marine Corps a unique military organization. The capabilities the Marine Corps provides are essential to naval expeditionary force success.

Combined Arms Concept

The Marine Corps has a long-standing, battle-proven commitment to combined arms operations. These operations closely integrate air, ground, and support units to achieve a potent synergy. Effectively blending infantry forces, artillery, armor, and tactical aviation, from the water's edge to deep inland, the Corps generates maximum combat power with a minimum logistical footprint. Marine air, ground, and logistics components work together on a daily basis and deploy routinely as combined arms components of naval expeditionary forces. They are equipped and trained to conduct forward presence and crisis response in the littorals.

Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF)

To achieve the full benefit of the combined arms concept, the Marine Corps has evolved a basic and highly flexible structure – the Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF). The MAGTF constitutes a unique Marine Corps contribution to national defense. Embarked on amphibious ships and forward deployed, the MAGTF can execute a variety of





missions, from rendering humanitarian assistance to conducting theater warfare. This ability comes from the MAGTF's structural flexibility. Configured as Marine Expeditionary Forces (MEFs), Marine Expeditionary Brigades (MEBs), Marine Expeditionary Units (MEUs), or Special Purpose units, they are tailored for the mission and may include a wide range of combat power: infantry, tanks, amphibious assault vehicles, light armored vehicles, artillery, and aircraft. MAGTFs range in size from small Special Purpose units to large MEFs. (See Appendix A.)

One of the key features of Marine expeditionary organization is expandability. Because of the frequent need for rapid response, the initial force at the scene of a developing crisis may not be the decisive force. Crisis response requires the ability to expand the expeditionary force after its introduction in theater without sacrificing the continuity of operational capability. The MAGTF's modular structure lends itself to rapidly and easily expanding into a larger force as the situation demands by simply adding forces as needed to the core units of each existing element. This allows them to expand into a joint or combined force because the generic MAGTF structure parallels the structure of a multi-dimensional joint force.

Regardless of mission or size, MAGTFs have four basic elements:

- ❑ ***The Command Element (CE)*** provides inherent capabilities for exercising joint force command and control, surveillance and intelligence coordination, and crisis action planning.

- ❑ ***The Ground Combat Element (GCE)*** conducts ground operations, using amphibious craft and transport helicopters, maneuvering from the sea, thus permitting the naval expeditionary force to project combat power when and where it chooses. Close air support provides the firepower needed to ensure the success of ground combat elements.

- ❑ ***The Aviation Combat Element (ACE)*** conducts air operations and assists the naval expeditionary force to achieve its objective of battlespace dominance. It provides six functions: anti-air warfare, assault support, offensive air support, air reconnaissance, electronic warfare, and control of aircraft and missiles. The ACE can deploy from ships, forward expeditionary land bases, or both.

- ❑ ***The Combat Service Support Element (CSSE)*** provides many support functions. It can operate from naval vessels or expeditionary bases ashore. The CSSE can sustain forces and permit maximum flexibility in responding to crises.

The Marine Corps' commitment to combined arms operations has enabled it to work effectively with other services and allied forces. Marine forces are interoperable, both internally and externally, and effective in joint and combined operations. As operations become increasingly joint, the Marine Corps is well prepared to make significant contributions to integrated operations with other services.

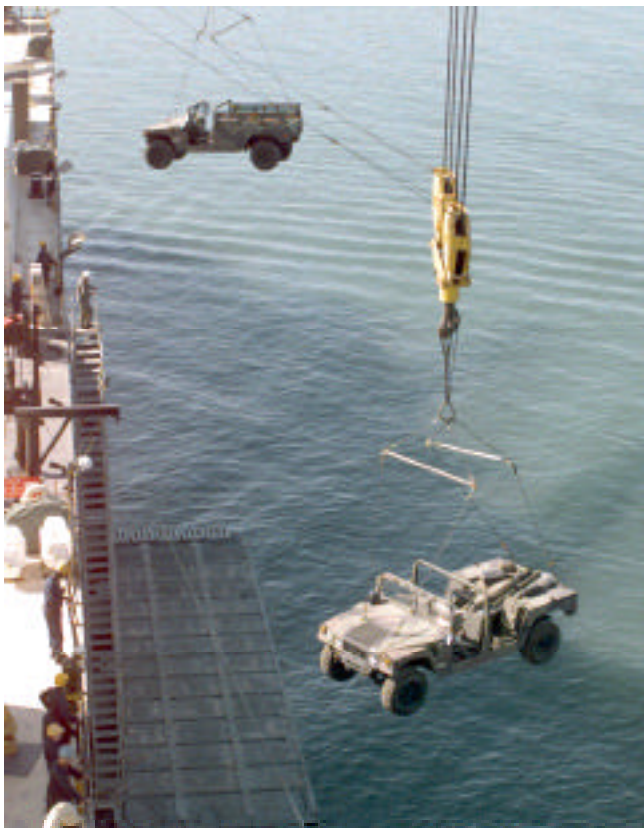
Expeditionary Readiness

The Marine Corps can conduct operations that require substantial tactical and logistical depth. It achieves this through the use of:

■ **Maritime Prepositioning Forces (MPF).** The MPF provides enough equipment and supplies to support a MEB during its first month of operations. Three

Maritime Prepositioning Squadrons have the capacity to support a MEF of one Marine Division, one Marine Aircraft Wing, and one Force Service Support Group. The squadrons are located strategically and can reach a crisis within days. In addition, they can move supplies ashore from a pier or at sea.

Maritime prepositioning ships of the future will provide indefinite sustainment by serving as a sea-based conduit for logistics support ashore. This might be accomplished as part of a larger sea-based logistics effort, which would include not only maritime prepositioning ships, but also aviation logistics support ships, hospital ships, and offshore petroleum distribution systems.



□ **Marine Aviation.** Like Marine ground forces, Marine aviation units have an expeditionary focus that is unique among American military organizations. Marine aviation is tied closely to Marine ground units, providing overwhelming firepower to maneuver commanders. No other



American force has this critical, organic capability. Another special quality of Marine aviation is its ability to operate ashore and afloat at the same level of effectiveness. Again, this is unique to the Corps and unmatched by any other aviation branch. Both the FA-18 Hornet and AV-8B Harrier can operate from Navy ships, expeditionary airfields, and austere forward sites. In fact, the Expeditionary Airfield (EAF) system allows for rapid construction and operation of stand-alone airfields. Two Aviation Logistics Support Ships are ready to sustain Marine aviation units for extended periods in the world's littorals. These ships, the USNS Curtiss and USNS Wright are maintained in the Ready Reserve and operated by the Military Sealift Command. These vessels give commanders unparalleled logistical flexibility and operational reach.

❑ **Total Force.** The U.S. Marine Corps Reserve is an important element of the naval expeditionary force. The Active Reserve is a force-in-readiness that repeatedly has proven its value in combat from Guadalcanal to the Gulf War. The Reserve greatly increases the military options available to civilian policymakers and operational planners. Reserve units routinely exercise with active forces. They have missions that lead to relevant combat responsibilities. They remain prepared to fight alongside the regular forces when needed. The Marine Corps Reserve is an essential part of the Total Force Marine Corps in peace and war. More than 98 percent of all Selected Marine Corps Reserve units are included in current operational plans.



TODAY'S CORPS — FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE

The Marine Corps today continues to be the expeditionary force-in-readiness envisioned by the 82nd Congress almost fifty years ago. The unique capabilities of Marine forces have never been more in demand, and employment of naval forces to influence events in littoral regions of the world has become a major focus of contingency planning. There are several compelling reasons why the Marine Corps' strategic concept will remain valid for the foreseeable future:

❑ The Marine Corps has an expeditionary focus - a special mindset - one that is constantly prepared for immediate deployment overseas to austere operating environments, bringing everything needed to accomplish the mission. This traditional Marine approach to operations has shaped its structure, values, and choice of equipment.

❑ The current National Military Strategy requires versatile, yet powerful forces that can respond quickly to fast-breaking events in regional situations. The Marine Corps is that kind of force, and now enjoys enhanced responsiveness capabilities.

❑ The Marine Corps' expeditionary readiness posture is designed to be immediately responsive. It does not require significant call-up of Reserves or massive national mobilization for crisis response. These attributes make the Corps a preferred and politically attractive instrument for missions of the National Command Authorities.



□ The Marine Corps is a highly efficient and cost effective organization. The Corps historically has provided a proportionally larger share of the Department of Defense's operational forces than the resources it consumes. The economic focus of the world is shifting rapidly from Europe to the Pacific and Indian Oceans' littoral areas. An increased national security interest in these areas is inevitable, and can best be addressed by the Navy and Marine Corps.

THE WAY AHEAD - OPERATIONAL PRIMACY

Building upon current capabilities and its established record for strategic and tactical innovation, the Corps is enhancing its combined arms concept as it enters the 21st Century. It will remain fundamentally expeditionary and naval in character. Winning battles is the Corps' *raison d'être*, and its record of victory demonstrates Marine commitment to combat readiness and a warrior culture. The Marine Corps will continue to build on this foundation by doing those things that served it well in the past, while exploring new opportunities to enhance future capabilities. In this regard, the Marine Corps is focusing on the following areas: the primacy of the Marine and his rifle, enhancing MAGTF utility and combat power, modernizing with advanced technologies, and strengthening the partnership with the Navy.

Enhancing Individual Marines

The individual Marine is the lifeblood of the Corps. Today's Marine Corps is composed of the world's finest warriors - disciplined, motivated, and dedicated - fully worthy of those who preceded them. To maintain this distinction and to meet the challenges of the 21st Century, the Marine Corps is constantly searching for ways to improve how young women and men are transformed into Marines. To fulfill this objective,



the Marine Corps has lengthened and toughened recruit training, and revitalized Marine Combat Training. They have taken the first steps in a program focused on keeping Marines together throughout their first enlistment. The Corps is working to sustain and reinforce “transformation” throughout a Marine’s career. Transformation will provide stronger, smarter, and more capable Marines, who have the self-confidence, warrior instincts, sense of team work, and flexibility of mind and body to meet the challenges of the 21st Century. And when Marines return to civilian life after three years or thirty, America will be better off because her sons and daughters have been United States Marines.

MAGTF Combat Power

Tested and re-tested in a myriad of situations that span the spectrum of operations from the compassion of humanitarian assistance to the animosity of combat, the MAGTF is the Marine Corps' legacy, trademark, and foundation for future success. It has been the organizational framework for employing Marine forces for the last 50 years, and as the Corps enthusiastically pursues new ideas today, it remains its basic combat organization. Nevertheless, as the Marine Corps evolves in the next century and embraces new concepts to meet new challenges it must explore new forms and employment of the MAGTF, to include the shape, training, and size.

The MAGTF of the next century must have increased combat power, operational versatility, utility, and deployability. The key to accomplishing this is the development of intermediate initiatives within current capabilities and conducting training programs that address those challenges that lay ahead. Furthermore, the Marine Corps must ensure its MAGTFs are sized correctly to accomplish a wide range of contingency missions. This means being prepared to deploy units of varying scale using a variety of means: aboard amphibious shipping, as Maritime Prepositioning Forces, by strategic airlift, or through a combination of these methods.

Modernization

The Marine Corps is aggressively modernizing to enhance its combat capabilities. Toward this end, the Marine Corps, with the Navy, is developing concepts and procuring systems/items which will enable operational superiority on the 21st Century battlefield. These efforts are extensive and include:

□ The **MV-22 Osprey** is a joint, multi-mission, vertical/short take-off and landing (VSTOL) tiltrotor aircraft. It performs a wide range of VSTOL missions as effectively as a conventional helicopter while achieving the long-range cruising efficiencies of a twin turboprop aircraft. The Osprey is the Marine Corps' main aviation acquisition priority.

□ The **Advanced Amphibious Assault Vehicle (AAAV)** will be the Marine Corps' primary means of accomplishing surface power projection. It also will allow naval expeditionary forces to eliminate the battlefield mobility gap. The AAAV will be the principal means of armor-protected water and land mobility and direct fire support for Marine infantry during combat operations, including day/night, all-weather, and nuclear, biological, and chemical environments. For the first time in the history of naval warfare, maneuver ashore can be attained in one stroke, giving naval vessels and landing forces sufficient sea space for maneuver,

surprise, and protection. The AAV is the Marine Corps' top ground acquisition priority.

□ ***Amphibious Shipping*** must be adequate and state-of-the-art and is essential to the execution of Operational Maneuver from the Sea (OMFTS). The current modernization plan enables the formation of 12 Amphibious Ready Groups to meet forward presence, contingency, and warfighting requirements. This program will provide the most modern over-the-horizon launch and recovery platforms for the MV-22, the



AAAV, the Landing Craft (Air Cushion) (LCAC), and the short-take-off and vertical-landing (STOVL) variant of the Joint Strike Fighter - all of which are critical to the execution of OMFTS. Sea-basing also provides protection to the land force by reducing the vulnerabilities associated with large logistics "footprints" ashore.

□ The ***Joint Strike Fighter*** (JSF) program will provide the Marine Corps' next generation aircraft, replacing the AV-8B and F/A-18C/D with a single STOVL platform. It will solve the tactical aircraft age and attrition problems and meet Marine aviation's goal to neckdown to a single type of fixed wing aircraft. But more importantly, it will provide the Marine Corps with a superior performance, stealthy, state-of-the-art technical, multi-mission jet aircraft that can operate with full mission loads from amphibious class ships or austere expeditionary airfields. To maintain the Marine Corps' force-in-readiness responsibilities, Marine aviation must sustain the capabilities of its legacy aircraft until they are replaced. The Marine Aviation Campaign Plan provides this blueprint: finding new ways to bring together technology, increased manning, and sustainable operational tempo to make Marine aviation units more robust.

It provides a bridge to the 21st Century when STOVL JSF, MV-22, UH-1Y/AH-1Z, and KC-130J will be the backbone of the Marine Aviation Combat Element (ACE).

❑ **Non-Lethal Weapons** (NLW) represent a new dimension in Marine Corps capabilities. The Marine Corps is fielding and training with a new class of weapons designed to stun and incapacitate without causing permanent injuries or gross physical destruction to property. NLW will expand the range of options open to commanders in Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW).

❑ The **Chemical Biological Incident Response Force** (CBIRF) is a national asset provided by the Marine Corps that is manned, trained, and equipped to respond to chemical or biological terrorist incidents. CBIRF is a rapid response, initial detection, decontamination, and treatment capability trained to respond after a chemical or biological attack.

❑ **Unmanned Aerial Vehicles** (UAVs) are a new technology of interest to the Marine Corps. UAVs have many potential uses and can assist with intelligence, surveillance, communication, and reconnaissance. They can provide critical near-real time information.

❑ **Artillery** is a key component of the MAGTF, giving tremendous firepower to forward deployed units. The Corps is now evaluating the structure and equipment of Marine artillery. The intent is to increase the firepower organic to ground units. Future studies will cover many options, including advanced cannon artillery weapons and rockets.

Enduring Navy Partnership

Without the Navy, the Marine Corps' stalwart partner in littoral power projection, Marines would not be able to accomplish their mission. The Navy provides capabilities that complement, support, and sustain the MAGTF's expeditionary striking power. Strengthening the bonds of the Navy-Marine Corps Team and embracing new ideas that will benefit both services is a priority of the Corps. And all Marines, particularly those who work closely with Sailors, will continue to cultivate the strong traditional relationship that both services have enjoyed. As the next century brings forth new operational ideas and concepts, both services will embrace all opportunities that improve their interaction. The Corps and the Navy will need to reevaluate existing systems, programs, and processes in an attempt to determine future requirements for littoral power projection and focus on ways to further enhance the overall utility of naval forces. This effort will surely require change in some areas. While the doctrinal, procedural, and systemic forms of the Navy-Marine Corps alliance can and should evolve, the substance of the relationship will remain true to

the traditional sense of teamwork that has served them well throughout their long history together.

THE MARINE CORPS - THE 21st CENTURY FORCE OF CHOICE

The Marine Corps will continue to meet the needs of a dynamic security environment. It will remain prepared to fight, on short notice, under any circumstances, and in any conflict. The Corps will continue to be a force rich in history and tradition, but capable and ready to innovate and change, while always maintaining the highest values of honor, courage, and commitment. Individual Marines, the world's finest military professionals, will continue to be trained and educated to act intelligently and independently, to seek responsibility, and to be accountable.

This armed force will continue to be the world's finest military force, comprised of motivated, dedicated warriors, whose unique capabilities will be required in future conflicts. It will be an aggressive force with effective leaders possessing the abilities to rapidly observe, orient, decide, and act to achieve decisive results.

Innovation and improvisation will remain the foundation upon which the Corps will build its future vision. Marines will continue to show the same ingenuity and creativity that were used to develop amphibious doctrine before World War II, close-air support tactics in the Korean War, and the Marine Expeditionary Unit concepts that have served the United States so well over the last decade.

Building upon this framework, the Marine Corps will be better prepared to handle a wide diversity of missions across the entire spectrum of scenarios, ranging from a military attack against the United States or its interests, to acts of political violence against Americans abroad, to those operations currently described as "Military Operations Other Than War." Operating forward, in fully capable combined arms teams, the Marine Corps will remain fundamentally naval and expeditionary in character, as comfortable on the seas as on the land and in the air. With the Navy, Marines will be able to go anywhere rapidly and project force across any shore against any foe, sustaining themselves from sea or land bases. The Corps will be ever ready to project the power and influence of the United States from the sea and to any foreign shore.

